

Baby & Kids

Dress-Up Designs

Costumes come out to play every day

by Mary Gerlach

A recent article in *The New York Times* championed the value of play time and the physical, emotional and social development it fosters in children. The impact of role-playing, meaning pretend play as another person or creature, works double time for children's positive development: increasing creativity, abstract thinking and social skills. The importance of thinking beyond personal experience and imagining life in another way has become more sophisticated in recent years, and the trend has taken over every moment of many children's lives and enlivened their imagination.

Fantasy costumes are trending up for children's costumes, according to Mark Levine of **Aeromax**, a dress-up and role-playing outfit designer and manufacturer. Aeromax, he explains, is part of this movement with the introduction

of its newest looks including princess, knight and pirate. Yet, **Aeromax** is at the forefront of true-to-life role-playing clothes that are miniature versions of their adult inspirations. Take the firefighter, for example; no kid's stuff here — all the details are in place to help a child pretend to be whatever hero or profession imagined.

The turn toward true-to-life designs is necessary in today's market, Levine notes, because consumers are becoming more savvy and choosing better-quality products. The focus on quality extends to the child and is ultimately beneficial to their own development, Levine adds. "Pretend play is educational, it helps children with communication skills [and] it helps children build self-esteem," among many other positive effects. The Get Real Gear line, for example, is not intended to be a once-a-year item, such as a Halloween costume, but rather a toy that a child can use time and time again. That's why Aeromax, in all its product collections, uses the finest materials and production processes to withstand the test of every child's imagination.

Aeromax's newest line offers the same true-to-life designs of the Get Real Gear line in smaller sizes for 6-12 month olds. Important features like snaps in strategic places and footies make the role-playing outfits suitable and comfortable for the littlest dreamers. And, older children can play with Aeromax's expanded selection of dress-up accessories like astronaut boots and a space exploration backpack to hold a helmet, boots and more.



Now there's a costume for everyone in the family. **Aeromax** (28W079 Industrial Ave., Lake Barrington, IL 60010) has introduced ten new designs in sizes 6-12 months to its Get Real Gear line of role playing costumes for children, some in limited adult sizes. Call 847/756-4085.